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Soc 4-01.1 Ramparts

Org 1 NSA

CIA 2-01.2 Students

WE WERE RIGHT

BY

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CIA CRISIS BY PRESENT AND FORMER NSA OFFICERS

EDITOR'S NOTE: The word "president" figures heavily in Dennis Shaul's post (*and future?*), President of the American Association of Oxford while a Rhodes Scholar (1960-62), after his graduation from Notre Dame (where he was student-body president) he served as president of NSA during 1962-63. Now an associate in the law firm of Buckingham, Doolittle and Burroughs, in Akron, Dennis, 28, teaches at the University of Akron Law School, hopes to combine a career in law and politics. Outside interests include the "Sierra Club," music.

The National Student Association was organized partially to serve as a bulwark against Communist organizations that were active both here and abroad shortly after World War II. Then, in 1952, NSA was approached about the possibility of extending some of its programs, using CIA funds for the purpose.

Why this was done relates in part to the existing needs of foreign policy, and, in part, to the climate of the times. The early '50s were, after all, the McCarthy era. In retrospect, some people feel that NSA was a political organization, sponsored unnecessarily by the Government. NSA projects could just as well have been run, they think, through groups like—to take an extreme—the Rotary Clubs, or, as a middle course, by scholarships and exchange programs.

It is true that NSA was designed to reach political people. In the early '50s, American student organizations had power to deal with students on the middle-to-left-wing side of the political spectrum in Africa, Latin America, and Asia, because these groups were moving into power. However, it would have been obviously impossible at that time for the Government to support openly an organization that was attempting to work with progressive, often very left-wing, groups abroad.

Imagine the controversy, if someone had gone on the Senate floor and said ~~Approved For Release 2005/01/05 : CIA RDP75-00149R000700220001-3~~ to combat Communism per se any more. But in the 1960 campaign, [continued on page 362]

budget this year, we would like to include \$300,000 for NSA—which was then being attacked by right-wing clubs such as Young Republicans for MacArthur. Most people who complain today cannot understand the mood of widespread witch-hunting that existed then, the mood that moved Arthur Miller to write *The Crucible*.

Some people say, "Well, granted that you couldn't have done all this openly, why was it necessary to do it at all? Was it all that important, anyway?" This connotation was back of Senator Fulbright's recent criticism in *The New York Times Magazine*. But I don't doubt that it was vital in the late '50s, for example, to work with the leaders of the Algerian independence struggle—even though the State Department's official position was, at least implicitly, to back our ally, France. The student movement, especially in the '50s, represented something the rest of America was losing—dynamic and progressive young people in an era when (with all due respect to Eisenhower and Dulles) the country's worldwide image was the exact opposite.

It's arguable that our working abroad became less important as time went on. I don't think so. I went to the Vienna Youth Festival in 1959. Although Communist-inspired, as they all were, it was the first to be held outside the Iron Curtain. This gesture alone demonstrated the Soviets' own feeling of strength in the youth field; they could move into a neutral country and expect 25,000 people to come, three-fifths of whom were from developing nations. And they tried to hammer home that they were the rolling tide of history. They represented the progressive movements, the rising nationalism, independence, anticolonialism. American society was decadent, without culture or dynamism, its young people given over to politically irrelevant pastimes like jazz.

All too often we make the assessment that contacts are not necessary; that the cold war has more or less changed. I agree that we aren't out to combat Communism per se any more. But in the 1960 campaign, [continued on page 362]